

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-14

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R 270405Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7504

USDEL JEC PARIS

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 17068

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MILI

SUBJECT: COMMUNIST RAID IN QUANG NGAI CITY

FOLLOWING TEL FROM DANANG REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO. QTE

R 260001Z SEP 73

FM AMCONSUL DANANG

TO RUMJIR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO RHMSMVA/USDAO/SAIGON

RUMMRGA/CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB

C O N F I D E N T I A L DANANG 1139

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MILI

SUBJECT: COMMUNIST RAID IN QUANG NGAI CITY

1. SUMMARY: THE EARLY MORNING OF SEPT 23, QUANG NGAI CITY

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RECEIVED BETWEEN 20 AND 30 ROUNDS OF MORTAR FIRE IN THE VICINITY

OF THE PROVINCIAL WAREHOUSE AND MOTOR POOL COMPOUND. SUBSEQUENT TO THE ATTACK BY FIRE AN ENEMY RAIDING FORCE OF UNKNOWN SIZE ENTERED THE COMPOUND APPARENTLY EXPECTING TO FIND A LARGE QUANTITY OF RICE IN THE EMPTY WAREHOUSE. THE RAIDING FORCE DESTROYED SOME VEHICLES AND LEFT THE AREA WITHOUT CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT TROOPS. THERE WERE NO KNOWN INJURIES. END SUMMARY.

2. BETWEEN 0100 AND 0145 SEPT 23 THE NORTHWEST SECTION OF QUANG NGAI CITY RECEIVED 20 TO 30 ROUNDS OF MIXED 60 MM AND 82 MM MORTAR FIRE FROM THE WEST AND NORTHWEST. AT APPROX 0145 HRS THE MORTAR FIRE STOPPED AND EXPLOSIONS, SMALL ARMS AND B-40 FIRE WERE HEARD IN THE VICINITY OF THE PROVINCIAL WAREHOUSE AND MOTOR POOL COMPOUND LOCATED ON PHAN BOI CHAU STREET. A SMALL COMMUNIST RAIDING FORCE, NUMBER UNKNOWN, APPARENTLY PENETRATED THE WAREHOUSE INTENT ON STEALING RICE THEY ERRONEOUSLY BELIEVED WAS STORED THERE. A RF REACTION ELEMENT REINFORCED WITH TWO ARMORED CARS DID NOT RESPOND TO THE INCIDENT UNTIL 0300 HRS AND PROBABLY DID NOT ENTER THE WAREHOUSE COMPOUND UNTIL DAYLIGHT.

3. A DAYLIGHT INVESTIGATION OF THE PROVINCIAL WAREHOUSE AND MOTOR POOL COMPOUND BY A CONGEN REPRESENTATIVE REVEALED THAT THE PF GUARDS OUTSIDE THE COMPOUND HAD BEEN DISPERSED DURING THE ABF OR INITIAL CONTACT WITH THE RAIDING FORCE. THE COMMUNISTS HAD BREACHED THE COMPOUND'S OUTER CHAIN LINK FENCE WITH AN EXPLOSIVE CHARGE. ONCE INSIDE THE COMPOUND ACCESS TO BUILDINGS AND INNER FENCES HAD BEEN FORCED WITH EXPLOSIVES OR B-40 FIRE. ALL BUILDINGS INSIDE THE COMPOUND HAD BEEN ENTERED BY THE RAIDERS. FOUR VEHICLES IN THE MOTOR POOL WERE DESTROYED BY EXPLOSIVES AND A SMALL BUILDING CONTAINING AUTOMOTIVE PARTS WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE. NO OTHER DAMAGE WAS OBSERVED. THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES REPORTED IN THE INCIDENT.

4. RESIDENTS IN THE WAREHOUSE AREA QUESTIONED ON SEPT 23 BY PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES ESTIMATED THAT 300 LABORERS HAD MOVED INTO THE AREA WEST OF THE WAREHOUSE WITH THE RAIDING PARTY. SECTOR OFFICERS, HOWEVER, STATED THAT THE LABOR FORCE WAS ONLY ABOUT 100 MEN. QUANG NGAI SECTOR OFFICERS CONCLUDED THAT THE RAIDING FORCE BELIEVED THAT A LARGE QUANTITY OF RICE WAS STORED IN THE WAREHOUSE AND THAT ONCE THE WAREHOUSE WAS SECURED

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THE LABORERS WOULD HAVE CARRIED THE RICE OUT. THERE WAS NO RICE STORED IN THE WAREHOUSE, HOWEVER, AND NO INDICATION THAT ANY OTHER ITEMS WERE TAKEN.

5. IN RESPONSE TO THE PROVINCE CHIEF'S REQUEST FOR AN ICCS INVESTIGATION OF THE INCIDENT, THE INDONESIAN DELEGATION WENT TO QUANG NGAI ON THE 23RD TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER.

6. COMMENT: MR-1 INTELLIGENCE SOURCES HAVE REPORTED OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS THAT COMMUNIST UNITS IN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE ARE SHORT OF RICE. HAD THERE BEEN RICE STORED IN THE PROVINCIAL WAREHOUSE, ITS THEFT WOULD HAVE POSSIBLY EASED THIS SHORTAGE AND AT THE SAME TIME EMBARRASSED THE GVN. WHETHER OR NOT RAIDERS WERE SEEKING RICE, HOWEVER, THE COMMUNISTS MADE THE POINT THAT THEY RETAIN A CAPACITY TO STRIKE WITHIN A PROVINCIAL CAPITAL, AND, IN THIS INSTANCE, AT LEAST, TO ESCAPE UNSCATHED. THIS IS THE FIRST SUCH ATTACK ON A PROVINCIAL CAPITAL IN MR-1 SINCE PRIOR TO THE JANUARY CEASEFIRE. END COMMENT.

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